

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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R 161423Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3060
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 7206

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PO
SUBJECT: POLITICAL NOTES FROM MARIO SOARES

REF: LISBON 6967

1. THE SOCIALIST POSITION: AT A MEETING WITH ME
SEPTEMBER 15 WHICH DEALT MAINLY WITH ECONOMIC TOPICS,
MARIO SOARES MADE THE FOLLOWING POLITICAL COMMENTS IN PASSING:

(A) HE WOULD SHORTLY RESHUFFLE HIS GOVERNMENT.
MANUELA DA SILVA HAD BEEN A PROBLEM AND HER
DEPARTURE WOULD BE ALL TO THE GOOD (REFTEL). SHE
HAD HAD SERIOUS DIFFERENCES WITH SOUSA GOMES. THE GOVERNMENT
WOULD DEVELOP A NEW AND MORE REALISTIC PLAN.
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(B) WE COULD BE CERTAIN SOUSA GOMES WAS A GOOD MAN.
HE WAS NOT BRILLIANT BUT HE WAS COMPETENT AND SERIOUS AND
HAS IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS WITH THE CHURCH. I NOTED THAT
SOUSA GOMES'S IMAGE DID NOT INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN THE
BUSINESS COMMUNITY BUT THAT COULD BE DUE TO HIS
ASSOCIATION WITH MANUELA DA SILVA. SOARES DENIED THAT

SOUSA GOMES SHARED MANUELA'S DOCTRINAIRE APPROACH.

(C) THE SOCIALIST PARTY CONTINUED TO MAKE PROGRESS ON RESOLVING ITS INTERNAL PROBLEMS. CONTRARY TO PRESS SPECULATION THE MEETING THIS WEEKEND OF THE PS WOULD FOCUS NOT ON THE GOVERNMENT BUT ON INTERNAL PARTY MATTERS. PRIORITY ISSUES WERE (1) LABOR POLICY, (2) INTERNAL ORGANIZATION, (3) FORMATION OF CADRES AND (4) IMPROVING THE PARTY'S CAPACITY TO DEVELOP POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE ON OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES. THE WEEKEND MEETING WOULD ALSO SET THE STAGE FOR LOPES CARDOSO'S REMOVAL FROM THE PARTY. THE PARTY'S LEFT WING WAS NO LONGER A CONCERN.

(D) REPORTS THAT THE SOCIALISTS ARE CONTEMPLATING A COALITION WITH THE PSD ARE NONSENSE. THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY WAS TO SEEK A MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENT ON A LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM. THE MOST HE WOULD BE WILLING TO CONCEDE FOR THIS WOULD BE SOME POSTS TO PSD FAITHFUL WHO WOULD COME AS INDIVIDUALS NOT AS PSD REPRESENTATIVES.

(E) RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE EXCELLENT BETWEEN HIM AND THE PRESIDENT. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT FAVOR A COALITION GOVERNMENT, NOR WOULD HE FAVOR A "PRESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT." THE PRESIDENT INTENDED TO "PUT SA CARNEIRO'S BACK TO THE WALL" BY ASKING HIM EITHER TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT'S

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ECONOMIC PROGRAM OR COME UP WITH A BETTER ONE.

2. AND THE PSD COUNTERPOINT: THE FOREGOING REFLECTS CHARACTERISTIC SOARES OPTIMISM. THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY FOR SEEKING A MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENT ON A LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM WILL FACE TOUGH GOING WITH THE OPPOSITION. BOTH THE PSD AND CDS WILL DEMAND CONCRETE CONCESSIONS. PSD INSIDER RUI MACHETE HAS TOLD US THAT THE PREFERRED PSD STRATEGY IS DESIGNED TO FORCE AN OVERALL UNDERSTANDING ON THE PS WITHIN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. MAXIMUM PRESSURE WILL BE APPLIED IN MARCH OR APRIL OF NEXT YEAR. THE PSD EXPECTS THE CONTINUING ECONOMIC DECLINE TO REINFORCE ITS BARGAINING POSITION. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PS WHEN THE ASSEMBLY RESUMES IN MID-OCTOBER, THE PSD WILL PRESS FOR PATRONAGE AND WILL PUSH ESPECIALLY HARD FOR THE PS TO DROP ITS OBJECTION TO PSD ENTRY INTO THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL. ACCORDING TO MACHETE, THE PSD IS NOT INTERESTED IN FORCING A SHORT-TERM POLITICAL CRISIS. IT DOES NOT WANT ELECTIONS NOW AND IS UNWILLING TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT EITHER ALONE OR IN COALITION WITH THE CDS. CARLUCCI

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